

Message Text

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ACTION SS-30

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INFO AMEMBASSY ATHENS PRIORITY

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S E C R E T NICOSIA 3489

EXDIS

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR US OTRA (AHEPA DELEGATION)

SUBJECT: AHEPA VISIT TO CYPRUS: ASSESSMENT

REF: NICOSIA 3477

1. AHEPA DELEGATION ARRIVED WITH MINIMAL BACKGROUND IN OR UNDERSTANDING OF COMPLEXITIES CYPRUS SITUATION. DURING COURSE 32-HOUR WIRLWIND VISIT GROUP:

A) DEVELOPED APPRECIATION OF CLERIDES AS INTELLIGENT, CAPABLE, REASONABLE AND SOPHISTICATED LEADER.

B) WAS IMPRESSED WITH CLERIDES' ATTITUDE TOWARD SECRETARY KISSINGER (CLERIDES TOLD GROUP HE IN DAILY CONTACT WITH KISSINGER AND URGED AHEPA TO GET OFF SECRETARY'S BACK.)

C) CHANGED ITS OPINION OF DENKTASH, WHOM IT FOUND TO BE SINCERE, INTELLIGENT, REASONABLE, AND HUMANE. DENKTASH, WE GATHER, PUT ON MASTERFUL PERFORMANCE.

D) GAINED SOME APPRECIATION OF TURK CYPRIOT VIEWPOINTS, PROBLEMS AND ANXIETIES.

E) DEVELOPED CLEARER UNDERSTANDING OF PROBLEMS SURROUNDING MAKARIOS' RETURN AND LEFT CONVINCED HIS RETURN WOULD BE OBSTACLE

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TO SETTLEMENT AND SHOULD BE ACTIVELY THWARTED. AHEPA WILL WORK

DIRECTLY ON THIS AND WILL ALSO ENLIST ARCHBISHOP IACOVES.

F) CONFIRMED ITS ORIGINAL OPINION THAT REFUGEE RETURN TO HOMES ESSENTIAL TO ANY SETTLEMENT. AT SAME TIME GROUP BECAME MORE AWARE OF COMPLEXITIES OF REFUGEE PROBLEM AND WAS SHAKEN BY REFUGEE REJECTION OF CERTAIN AHEPA AID GESTURES AND INTENSITY OF EMOTION SURROUNDING ENTIRE ISSUE.

2. LOCAL PRESS GAVE AHEPA VISIT FULL COVERAGE BUT PUBLIC NOTICE WAS PROBABLY DISTRACTED BY BUILDUP OF SPECULATION ON CLERIDES' FUTURE AND MAKARIOS' ACTIVITIES. EDITORIAL COMMENT WAS STRAIGHT FORWARD. IN TERMS OF PUBLIC RELATIONS VISIT WAS NET PLUS FOR US AND MAY HELP COOL ANTI-AMERICAN FEELING SOMEWHAT. HOWEVER, SEVERAL GOCPRIOT OFFICIALS HAVING CONTACT WITH GROUP PRIVATELY EXPRESSED CONCERN OVER WHAT THEY FELT TO BE AHEPA'S SIMPLISTIC AND OFTEN NAIVE APPRECIATION OF CYPRUS PREDICAMENT.

3. IN SUM, AHEPA LEADERSHIP CONFIRMED MANY OF ITS PREJUDICES, MODIFIED OTHERS AND GAINED SOME IMPORTANT INSIGHTS IN AREAS WHERE IT HAD BEEN EITHER MISLED OR TOTALLY UNINFORMED (DENKTASH BEST CASE IN POINT.) STILL , AHEPA MAINTAINS VIEW THAT USG, PERSONIFIED BY SECRETARY KISSINGER, HAS BOTCHED ITS CYPRUS POLICY. WHILE THERE MAY BE SOME MODIFICATION IN TACTICS, WE DOUBT THERE WILL BE LET UP IN AHEPA CRITICISM OF PAST POLICY. IN TERMS OF FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS, THERE ARE WAYS IN WHICH AHEPA CAN BE HELPFUL. IT CERTAINLY WISHES TO BE SO.
CRAWFORD

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